

End for-profit contractors from operating new Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) standard shelters or influx facilities. Such shelters or facilities must be state-licensed, meet Flores Settlement Agreement standards, and not used to house children indefinitely.

Expand alternatives to detention and the successful Family Case Management Program (FCMP), which was a program that was designed to increase compliance with immigration obligations through a comprehensive case management strategy supported by community organizations.

Remove roadblocks to placing unaccompanied children with sponsors by lowering the total number of cases a manager may take, mandating lower staffing ratios, and ending the information sharing agreement between ORR and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Ensure unaccompanied children have access to legal counsel and continue to be placed in a safe setting for their initial asylum case review.

Provide resources to non-profit centers that are helping provide humanitarian assistance.

Permit Members of Congress, accompanying staff, and credentialed press (without cameras) to visit any facility with 24-hour notice.

We need to ensure that our government funds must not be used to traumatize or harm asylum seekers. The Trump administration's lack of empathy and compassion for migrant families and children at the U.S.-Mexico border is heartbreaking and demands action by Congress. Those who come to our nation should be treated with dignity and respect and that is something the administration has failed to provide when treating migrant families. We have a crisis at the southern border, and we need to ensure our officials have the resources they need while respecting the dignity of those in the U.S. government's care. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and join me in the fight to protect children's human rights.

IN RECOGNITION OF JOHN FARRITOR'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. MIKE LEVIN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 23, 2019

Mr. LEVIN of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 100th birthday of veteran and integral part of the San Diego and Camp Pendleton communities, John Farritor.

John was born on July 9, 1919 in Broken Bow, Nebraska. At the age of 13, John dropped out of school to run his family's 720-acre hay farm. Although he wanted to enlist after Germany invaded Poland in 1939, he waited a year to help his mother at the ranch before joining the Marines.

John started boot camp at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego in July 1941 and was later stationed at Camp Pendleton as a member of the 3rd Marine Division Field Artillery. John is one of the few surviving Marines who marched 55 miles from Camp Elliot to the newly opened Camp Pendleton in Oceanside in September 1942.

John's division played a crucial role in several battles in the Pacific, including the battle

to liberate Guam and the battle of Iwo Jima. He remembers watching his fellow soldiers raising the American flag after the battle of Iwo Jima. The morning after the battle, he rose at dawn to make sure the flag was still flying over the hill.

John continued his service after the war and joined the 11th Marine Regiment, 1st Battalion at Camp Pendleton. He served in the Korean War, where he received a wound to the hand from flying shrapnel. Despite his years of service, he has refused a Purple Heart and does not like being called a war hero. He says that "all of the real heroes were buried over there."

During his 30 years of service in the Marines, he rose from the rank of private to first sergeant. He documented his experiences in his memoir *Through It All: Stories from the Top*, published in 2001.

John Farritor has lived an incredible and full life. He is a true inspiration for our community, and we cannot thank him enough for his service to his country and to Camp Pendleton.

John Farritor celebrated his birthday on July 9 with friends and family in Vista, California. I am honored to pay tribute to John, and I wish him a very happy 100th birthday.

HANNA TEERMAN EARNS STATE DEPARTMENT SCHOLARSHIP

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 23, 2019

Mr. OLSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Hanna Teerman of Cinco Ranch High School in Katy, TX, who was selected for a scholarship from the U.S. Department of State's National Security Language Initiative for Youth.

This highly competitive merit-based scholarship will give Hanna the opportunity to live overseas in language immersion program to acquire skills that are critical to U.S. national security. During this program, Hanna will develop her foreign language skills, increase her cross-cultural understanding, strengthening her leadership capacity and foster new academic insights and ambitions.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Hanna Teerman on earning this prestigious scholarship.

RAISE THE WAGE ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 18, 2019

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the following letters in support of H.R. 582, Raise the Wage Act: International Brotherhood of Teamsters; National Urban League; Disability Coalition; Health Care Groups; Interreligious Working Group on Domestic Human Needs; First Focus Campaign for Children; Network Lobby for Catholic Social Justice; Americans for Democratic Action; and National Employment Lawyers Association.

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD

OF TEAMSTERS,

July 16, 2019.

U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: This week, the House of Representatives will take up H.R. 582, the Raise the Wage Act of 2019. The International Brotherhood of Teamsters urges you to vote for H.R. 582.

Income inequality is on an alarming trajectory and continues to rise unabated. Neither record-breaking corporate profits nor increased productivity have reversed or slowed this trend. This is not the kind of economy we should be building. The Raise the Wage Act is essential to bringing some measure of fairness and justice to workers who toil at the lower-end of the wage scale. It is an important step we can take to address growing pay inequality. An increase in the federal minimum wage, which has not increased since 2009, is long overdue.

H.R. 582 would raise the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$15.00 per hour by 2024. It would increase the minimum wage to \$8.55 this year, with increases over the subsequent six years. After 2024, the minimum wage would be indexed to median wage growth to ensure that its value does not erode.

Finally, the bill would remedy an egregious situation that has gone on for far too long. The bill would phase out the subminimum wage for tipped workers, which has been frozen at a paltry \$2.13 per hour for more than 20 years. And, it would end the subminimum wage for workers with disabilities employed in sheltered workshops and for workers under age 20.

No one who works hard and plays by the rules should live in poverty. Much is said about valuing work, and about respecting work. If we truly value work, if we truly respect work, the House will pass H.R. 582, the Raise the Wage Act of 2019.

Again, the Teamsters Union urges a yes vote on H.R. 582.

Sincerely,

JAMES P. HOFFA,
General President.

NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE
WASHINGTON BUREAU,

July 15, 2019.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: As President and CEO of the National Urban League, I am writing to express our strong support for immediate passage of the Raise the Wage Act of 2019 (H.R. 582). Raising the minimum wage to \$15/hour is a key provision of the National Urban League's Main Street Marshall Plan, a bold and comprehensive plan for lifting urban communities out of poverty and stimulating their economic growth.

The National Urban League has been in every fight to raise the minimum wage. While the road from poverty to plenty is long, raising the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$15/hour is an important and long overdue first step in lifting millions of families out of poverty and giving them a chance at a better life. No one—absolutely no one—who works full time should ever live in poverty. Yet, according to the Economic Policy Institute (EPI), one in nine U.S. workers are paid wages that can leave them in poverty, even when working full-time and year-round. Raising the minimum wage to \$15 would have a major impact on people of color. According to research, 38.1 percent of Black workers and 33.4 percent of Hispanic workers would get a raise if the federal minimum wage were increased to \$15.

We applaud the Raise the Wage Act of 2019 because it is a comprehensive minimum wage bill that would positively impact workers on different levels. H.R. 582 would:

Gradually raise the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$15 over the next six years to

lift millions of workers out of poverty, stimulate local economies, and restore the value of minimum wage;

Index future increases in the federal minimum wage to median wage growth to ensure the value of minimum wage does not once again erode over time;

Guarantee tipped workers are paid at least the full federal minimum wage by repealing the subminimum wage for tipped workers, which will ensure consistent, livable pay;

Guarantee teen workers are paid at least the full federal minimum wage by repealing the rarely used subminimum wage for youth workers; and

End subminimum wage certificates for individuals with disabilities to provide opportunities for individuals with disabilities to be competitively employed, taxpaying citizens and participate more fully in their communities.

Putting more money in the pockets of working Americans who will reinvest in our economy on things like groceries and housing will boost the economy from the bottom up and create real and sustainable job growth.

The federal minimum wage has not been increased since 2009. A decade is more than enough time for our nation's leaders to right this unjustifiable inequity. Let's get this done now. It's time for Congress to do the right—and smart—thing by working Americans. The National Urban League looks forward to working with you to get the Raise the Wage Act of 2019 enacted into law this year.

Sincerely,

MARC H. MORIAL,
President and CEO,
National Urban League.

CPSD, NATIONAL DISABILITY
RIGHTS NETWORK,
July 11, 2019.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: The undersigned organizations understand that the Raise the Wage Act of 2019 will soon come up for a vote before the full House. We unequivocally believe that any minimum wage bill must include ALL people, including people with disabilities. We strongly support the inclusion of the phase out of subminimum wages to people with disabilities, currently legal under Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), in the Raise the Wage Act and urge you to vote against any amendments that would leave people with disabilities out of this important bill.

Employment of people with disabilities has long been a bi-partisan national goal. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 established as a priority competitive integrated employment, where people with disabilities work in mainstream jobs alongside, and are paid comparable wages to, co-workers without disabilities. WIOA furthers the goal of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to advance the economic self-sufficiency of people with disabilities.

Yet, despite the clear national priority for competitive integrated employment, nearly 230,000 people with disabilities are legally paid sub-minimum wages under Section 14(c) of FLSA, largely in settings where they are segregated from their nondisabled peers and broader society. The subminimum wage creates and reinforces a life of poverty and dependency on public support. In hearings before this Congress, expert witnesses have testified that ending subminimum wages is a civil rights issue and that phasing out Section 14(c) is a critical component of any federal minimum wage bill.

As the Congressionally-created federal Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with

Disabilities ("the Committee") described in its report to Congress and the Labor Secretary:

[There is an] underlying need to amend Section 14(c) of the FLSA so that it reflects and aligns with modern federal disability policy and laws, which are based on the assumption that all individuals with disabilities are capable of, and have a right to, [competitive integrated employment]. The current widespread practice of paying workers subminimum wages, based on assumptions that people with disabilities cannot work in typical jobs, or on assumptions about the unavailability of alternative work opportunities, is antithetical to the intent of modern federal policy and law.

The National Council on Disability, an independent federal agency charged with advising the President, Congress, and other federal agencies regarding policies that impact people with disabilities, has repeatedly called for the elimination of sub-minimum wages under Section 14(c), including in its recent report, "National Disability Employment Policy, From the New Deal to the Real Deal: Joining the Industries of the Future."

The inclusion of the 14(c) phase out in the Raise the Wage Act sends a clear message to the public that it is no longer acceptable to pay individuals with disabilities less than the minimum wage. The undersigned organizations stress again the necessity that the Raise the Wage Act of 2019 retain the phase out of the use of 14(c) certificates and bring an end to this blatantly discriminatory practice which allows for the payment of subminimum wages to people with disabilities.

Sincerely,

American Association of People with Disabilities, Association of People Supporting Employment First, Association of University Centers on Disabilities, Autistic Self Advocacy Network, Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, Center for Public Representation, Collaboration to Promote Self Determination, Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund.

National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities, National Association for Rights Protection and Advocacy, National Council on Independent Living, National Disability Institute, National Disability Rights Network, National Down Syndrome Congress, National Organization on Disability, TASH.

July 3, 2019.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE SCOTT: The undersigned organizations are writing to express our support for the Raise the Wage Act of 2019 (H.R. 582). The Act would raise the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$15.00 an hour over a six-year period, after which the minimum wage would be indexed to median wages. Our organizations believe that raising the federal minimum wage will significantly contribute to improving quality of care and quality of life for nursing home residents across the country.

According to the Paraprofessional Healthcare Institute (PHI), nursing assistants earn a median wage of \$12.84 an hour and a median income of \$21,200 a year. Nursing assistants' inflation-adjusted wages have only increased six cents in the past 10 years, meaning that "while goods and services increased in price, the purchasing power of nursing assistant wages did not meaningfully increase in the past decade." Since nursing assistants (37 percent) rely on some form of public assistance, federal and state governments subsidize the nursing home industry by compensating for their workers' low wages. Unfortunately, the data suggest that a profession in caring for the country's most vulnerable individuals may lead to poverty.

Given the hardships involved with being a direct care worker, it is not surprising to learn that these positions cannot compete with less demanding and higher paying jobs, such as those in the fast food and retail industries. This strain on the nursing home workforce is supported by a recently published study in *The Gerontologist*, which indicates that periods of low unemployment (like the one the country is currently experiencing) result in nursing home workers looking for jobs outside of the industry. The report finds that high unemployment makes nursing home work more attractive and leads to better care for nursing home residents, noting that a 5.6 percentage point increase in the unemployment rate decreases deficiencies and would result in lower rates of pressure ulcers, physical restraints use, and weight loss.

Economic recessions should not dictate whether residents have access to quality of care and quality of life. The federal Nursing Home Reform Law requires every facility to provide services that allow residents to attain or maintain their "highest practicable physical, mental, and psychosocial well-being." Unfortunately, as the study above highlights, low wages continue to place residents at risk of experiencing higher rates of harm. A 2015 report by the Keystone Research Center further adds that high rates of staff turnover, most often attributed to low wages, disrupt staff-resident relationships and cause "the loss of a valuable source of information about resident well-being." As one nursing home worker explains in the report, "the work is just too hard for such low pay . . . many are either ready to walk away from the work or are thinking hard about doing so . . . Raising my wage to \$15 would . . . really change the way I think about my job."

Improving the experiences of nursing home workers is critical in light of the growing need for direct care workers in the coming years. PHI reports that, "by 2050, the population of adults aged 65 and above—who comprise 83 percent of the nursing home resident population—is expected to nearly double, from 47.8 million (in 2015) to 88 million." Additionally, the number of adults 85 years old and above (40 percent of residents) "is expected to more than triple over the same period from 6.3 million to 19 million." Continuing to pay our direct care workers low, uncompetitive wages for physically and emotionally difficult jobs will only place greater strain on resident care.

Our organizations thank you for taking this step to increase the federal minimum wage and making it easier for nursing home workers to provide care to our nation's most vulnerable individuals. The Raise the Wage Act gives both nursing home workers and residents the hope of a better life.

Sincerely,

Center for Medicare Advocacy, Justice in Aging, Long Term Care Community Coalition, National Association of Social Workers, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care, Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement.

DHN INTERRELIGIOUS WORKING
GROUP ON DOMESTIC HUMAN
NEEDS,

June 28, 2019.

DEAR MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES: The undersigned faith-based advocacy and religious organizations urge House leadership and members to advance the Raise the Wage Act of 2019 (H.R. 582) without further delay. The bill passed through committee months ago and is languishing as desperate workers wait for relief. We are deeply concerned about the plight of

our sisters and brothers who work hard but are still struggling to make ends meet. Inflation and rising prices have made the financial squeeze on low-wage workers unbearable. This bill offers a partial remedy to those in most desperate need. Its urgency warrants full consideration by the chamber without further delay. It is time for members to demonstrate that the financial security of workers is a priority in the House.

We come from a variety of faith perspectives, but our moral principles and faith traditions all affirm the need to promote human dignity by prioritizing vulnerable communities and individuals in need. Our faith traditions teach us that justice requires that every worker earn enough to provide a standard of living in accordance with their God-given dignity. The current federal minimum wage of \$7.25/hour and \$2.10/hour for tipped workers is woefully insufficient and has remained stagnant for the longest period in the history of our nation. This disregard is a shameful statement of neglect for those most in need in our society.

Passage of the Raise the Wage Act of 2019 would demonstrate to these workers relegated to a life of poverty that they are, in fact, valued as individuals and as members of society. The provisions of the Raise the Wage Act take substantive steps to ensure people earn wages that are enough to support themselves. Moving towards a universal wage floor of \$15 an hour is on-par with historical minimum wage rates and responds to the real cost of living everywhere in the nation. Phasing out the outdated subminimum wage for tipped workers, workers under the age of 20, and those with disabilities is just and is long overdue. Moreover, an annually adjusted minimum wage based on the nation's median hourly wages would curtail the growing pay inequality between the lowest-paid workers and the middle-class.

Our families and our economy have been increasingly burdened by wage stagnation and income inequality. The Raise the Wage Act of 2019 would immediately lighten this burden by gradually raising the wage floor to broadly impact those at the bottom of the workforce. According to policy experts, more than 1 in 4 workers would be impacted by this legislation, 90 percent of whom are over the age of 20. Estimates project that low-income earners would make an additional \$3,000 a year, on average, for those working year-round. The difference that makes for a preschool teacher, bank teller, or fast-food worker who struggles to get by on around \$20,000 per year would be remarkable. The Raise the Wage Act will particularly benefit women and people of color, who are disproportionately represented among low-wage workers. Additionally, this legislation corrects the harmful and exploitative practice of under-paying individuals with disabilities by recognizing the value of their work and paying them accordingly.

The time for the Raise the Wage Act, is long overdue. Just this month, we marked the shameful milestone of the longest period in U.S. history without a federal minimum wage increase. Justice cannot wait; and neither can Americans who labor every day with insufficient pay. The faith community calls on Leadership to schedule a floor vote on this important piece of legislation immediately. We also urge members of the House of Representatives to pass the Raise the Wage Act free of any degrading amendments which would undermine the law's benefits for poor workers.

Sincerely,

American Friends Service Committee; Bread for the World; Church World Service; Central Conference of American Rabbis; Conference of Superiors of Men (Catholic); Congregation of Our Lady of the Good Shepherd,

US Provinces; Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, St. Louise Province; Disciples Center for Public Witness (Disciples of Christ); Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries; Ecumenical Poverty Initiative.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; Faith in Public Life; Franciscan Action Network; Friends Committee on National Legislation; Interfaith Worker Justice; Jesuit Conference—Office of Justice and Ecology; Jewish Council for Public Affairs; Leadership Conference of Women Religious; Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate; National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd.

National Council of Churches; National Council of Jewish Women; NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice; Pax Christi USA; Polygon Education Fund; Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); The United Methodist Church—General Board of Church and Society; Union for Reform Judaism; Unitarian Universalist Association; United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries; Women of Reform Judaism.

FIRST FOCUS
CAMPAIGN FOR CHILDREN,
July 12, 2019.

Hon. ROBERT "BOBBY" SCOTT,
U.S. House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. MARK POCAN,
U.S. House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. STEPHANIE MURPHY,
U.S. House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SCOTT, CONGRESSMAN POCAN, and CONGRESSWOMAN MURPHY: On behalf of First Focus Campaign for Children, a bipartisan advocacy organization dedicated to making children and families the priority in federal policy and budget decisions, I would like to express our support for the Raise the Wage Act of 2019 (H.R. 582) and urge all members of the House of Representatives to vote yes in support of this legislation.

As an organization committed to ensuring the economic security of children and families in the United States, we applaud efforts to raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2024. Nationwide, 17.5 percent of children are living in families with incomes below the poverty line. At its current rate, a parent making minimum wage and working full-time cannot earn enough to pay market rent or lift his or her family out of poverty. Children in the U.S. are disproportionately affected by these low wages, and are 62 percent more likely to live in poverty than adults.

A recent landmark study from the National Academy of Sciences confirms that raising the federal minimum wage decreases child poverty. Written by a nonpartisan committee of the nation's leading experts on child poverty, *A Roadmap to Reducing Child Poverty* finds that income poverty directly causes negative outcomes to child well-being, yet when yet when a poor household receives additional income, such as from an increase to the minimum wage, parents and guardians are enabled to provide resources that have long-term positive impacts on a child's health and economic contributions.

According to the Economic Policy Institute, the new wage proposed would give higher pay to 41 million workers, 28 percent of which have children to support. This would mean the parents of over 11 million children would be empowered to support their child's healthy development with critical resources such as nutritious food, health care, adequate shelter, warm clothing, and educational materials.

Parents who live in a constant state of financial instability and struggle to provide

enough resources for their children often suffer from stress, anxiety, and depression, making it more difficult to respond to their children's emotional needs. Increased income therefore promotes financial stability, improves the physical and mental health of children and families and in turn, reduces child maltreatment rates.

The Raise the Wage Act of 2019 is both an important step towards improving economic stability for 11 million children and a vital investment in the future of our country. We are grateful for your leadership in making children and families a legislative priority, and we look forward to working with you on this and other proposals to improve the well-being of children and youth.

Sincerely,

BRUCE LESLEY,
President

NETWORK LOBBY FOR CATHOLIC
SOCIAL JUSTICE,
July 15, 2019.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice urges a yes vote on H.R. 582, the Raise the Wage Act of 2019. In the spirit of the Gospel, we promote a just society which ensures that all people are able to live dignified lives. Catholic Social Justice tells us that a just wage is the central indicator and "the most concrete means of verifying justice" within a fair, functioning, and flourishing economic system. In 2019 in the richest nation in the world, minimum wage workers are groaning and crying out under their financial burdens.

Surviving on \$7.25 an hour anywhere in the country is a bitter, harsh reality; supporting dependents or a family on this wage is impossible. Workers who are one work accident, job loss, or family illness away from economic disaster are so vulnerable—and they are the backbone of our nation. There is a covenant between labor and capital that is part of our nation's history of progress: full time work should be enough to keep families out of poverty. Today we find low wage earners working 2 or even 3 jobs to make ends meet. It is morally reprehensible that millions of people work full time, yet are a paycheck away from acute poverty and homelessness. Long and unpredictable hours with insufficient pay is a bitter existence of hard service and anxiety. Congress must finally prioritize these most vulnerable workers and alleviate their suffering.

NETWORK Lobby will be highlighting this week's floor votes on HR 582 in our annual voting record. One of two outcomes will take place: either the House will rally to pass an increase in the minimum wage or it will fail to do so. This vote will clearly reveal your solidarity with low-income workers—a no vote or support of a Motion to Recommit (MTR) is your denial of workers' dignity. Now is the time to demonstrate that low wage workers have value and deserve dignity in our national economic priorities. NETWORK Lobby urges Congress to vote for the Raise the Wage Act of 2019 as brought to the floor by Leadership and to vote NO on any MTR that may be offered.

Sincerely,

SISTER QUINCY HOWARD, OP,
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice.

AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRATIC ACTION,
July 15, 2019.

U.S. House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: As Americans for Democratic Action, we urge you to vote in favor of H.R. 582, the Raise the Wage Act. The last time the Federal minimum wage increased was July 24, 2009. Sunday, June 16th, marked the longest period since the Federal minimum wage was instituted that it hasn't been raised. It is with this in mind that a

new sense of urgency to change must be instilled.

The Raise the Wage Act Would:

Lift pay for tens of millions of workers and reverse decades of growing pay inequality;

Favor all low wage workers, only 10 percent of which being teenagers and restaurant workers;

Be particularly significant for workers of color, as 38 percent of African Americans and 33 percent of Latinos would see a wage increase;

Divert reliance on safety-net programs, which reduces burden on the taxpayer;

Raise wages for jobs considered to be middle class, including nearly one third of manufacturing workers, one fifth of construction workers, one sixth of educators, and one fourth of health care workers

It is critical that you vote in favor the Raise the Wage Act as it comes to the floor this week and reject any Motions to Recommit. This legislation would provide numerous benefits to the working people of America, which underscores the importance of passing the bill as written. With wage stagnation surpassing record levels, voting yes on the Raise the Wage Act will provide long overdue relief to those who work but struggle to make ends meet. Please vote yes to raise the wage and improve the lives of millions of Americans.

Sincerely,

DON KUSLER,
*National Director,
Americans for Democratic Action.*

NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT LAWYERS
ASSOCIATION
July 15, 2019.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the National Employment Lawyers Association (NELA), I am writing to express our strong support for, and to urge you to vote in favor of, passage of the Raise the Wage Act (H.R. 582). In order to gain passage of the strongest bill possible, we ask that you oppose any motion to recommit and any amendment that would weaken this bill when the bill is brought to a vote on the House floor.

NELA advances workers' rights and serves lawyers who advocate for equality and justice in the American workplace. With members in every state, NELA is the country's largest professional organization exclusively comprised of lawyers who represent individual employees in employment discrimination cases and other employment-related matters. NELA and our 69 state and local affiliates have more than 4,000 members across our nation. Our members are private civil

rights lawyers whose clients suffer the practical realities of an insufficient, inconsistent minimum wage.

The Raise the Wage Act is long-overdue. If passed, it will address the reality of stagnated wages and income inequality brought about, in part, by an outdated federal minimum wage that has not been raised in ten years. The current federal minimum wage of \$7.25/hr is worth 17% less than it was ten years ago. For a full-time, year-round minimum wage worker, this represents a loss of over \$3,000 in annual earnings. If passed, this much-needed bill would raise the federal minimum wage to \$8.55 this year and increase it over the next five years until it reaches \$15 an hour in 2024. The Raise the Wage Act also includes common sense language to adjust the minimum wage each year after 2024. It would phase out the subminimum wage for tipped workers, which has been frozen at a meager \$2.13 since 1991, and sunset the ability of employers to pay a subminimum wage to people with disabilities and workers under the age of twenty.

According to a recent Congressional Budget Office (CBO) Report, gradually raising the federal minimum wage will lift pay for nearly 27.3 million workers by 2024 and reduce the number of people living in poverty by 1.3 million. Nearly half of the 1.3 million people who would be raised out of poverty are children under the age of eighteen. The CBO study concurs that the benefits of this legislation outweigh its costs, and that passage of the bill will leave low-wage workers and their families far better off than they are now. This bill will bolster the middle class all across the country. Many workers in sectors that are considered skilled, such as early childhood education and health care, struggle to survive on \$15 per hour. Passage of a clean bill will lift those across the bottom of the workforce.

Tens of millions of workers in America currently cannot afford basic living expenses for themselves and the families they support. These same workers stock our grocery stores, fulfill our online purchases, clean offices and homes, and perform thousands of other jobs that make every aspect of the lives of higher wage earners function. These workers are your constituents, and they deserve a raise. We urge you to pass the Raise the Wage Act now.

Sincerely,

TERRY O'NEILL,
Executive Director.

RECOGNIZING LYNETTE LACKEY

HON. VAN TAYLOR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 23, 2019

Mr. TAYLOR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mrs. Lynette Lackey for her thirty-five years of dedicated service to the federal government and to the North Texas veterans community.

Mrs. Lackey began her career with the United States Army Corps of Engineers at Lake Texoma prior to transferring to the Sam Rayburn Memorial Veterans Center in Bonham, Texas, where she worked in various administrative positions. Eventually, Lynette would be assigned as the Congressional Liaison for the VA North Texas Health Care System, the second largest VA health care system in the country. As the assigned Congressional Liaison for the fourteen Congressional offices in the system, Lynette was responsible for responding to inquiries from a served population of over 134,000 veterans, over thirty-eight Texas counties and two counties in southern Oklahoma.

Lynette is often lauded throughout the region for her efforts to assist veterans, their families, and Congressional staff in navigating the often-complicated VA healthcare system. Mrs. Lackey consistently strives to solve the most complex veteran issues, always with the focus of providing the best possible outcomes for those she serves. Lynette has justifiably earned the respect and admiration of her colleagues in the community.

Now as Mrs. Lackey prepares to enjoy her well-deserved retirement, she looks forward to spending more time with her husband of thirty-eight years, Dean, and her children, Jack and Aubrun, and Cole and Leslie. Lynette also anticipates welcoming her first grandchild this fall, taking on the title of "Lolly" and becoming part of the "Lolly and Pop" duo of love and support surely to surround their newest addition.

The North Texas veteran's community and all those who have had the honor of working with her over the past twenty-two years, thank Mrs. Lynette Lackey for her steadfast service and wish her the best in her retirement.